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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 000553

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR EUR/SE, EB/TRA  
ROME FOR FAA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [FAIR](#) [ASEC](#) [ATRN](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TURKISH RESPONSE TO FAA REQUEST FOR CONSULTATIONS  
ON AVIATION SAFETY OVERSIGHT

REF: STATE 7574

[11.](#) (U) This cable contains an action request. See paras 2 and 8.

[12.](#) (SBU) Summary and action request. EconCouns delivered reftel points to senior GOT officials January 21-22. The Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority (DGCA) acknowledged that the DGCA had not yet implemented all the recommendations in the 2001 ICAO report, but emphasized that he was now working hard to do so in the coming months. He noted that the DGCA was also working to prepare for the March 5 ICAO audit, and requested that FAA schedule its consultations after March. Post requests that FAA propose a way forward to the GOT given their concerns, and that FAA consider providing the DGCA with informal assistance and/or training prior to the March 5 ICAO audit. End summary and action request.

[13.](#) (SBU) EconCouns and econoff delivered reftel points to GOT officials January 21-22, including: Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority (DGCA) Serdar Cebeci, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Deputy Director General for Aviation Vakur Gokdenizler, and Ministry of Transportation Deputy Undersecretary Tahir Dengiz. DG Cebeci acknowledged that the DGCA was still working on implementing the recommendations of the 2001 ICAO report. He emphasized that he was personally committed to resolving all outstanding issues related to safety oversight procedures, and that he had made this point several times to various FAA officials.

[14.](#) (SBU) Cebeci noted that, although the DGCA had received the ICAO report well over a year ago, the "political situation" as well as his taking over as DG had slowed down the reform process. Still, he said, serious efforts were underway to address the ICAO concerns. New legislation proposing changes to the civil aviation code was currently pending in Parliament. Cebeci said this legislation would resolve all the remaining problems, but it may not pass until summer given that the Parliament was new.

[15.](#) (SBU) Cebeci told EconCouns he was "very disappointed" by the tone of reftel points, which he perceived to be a threat. He said he understood from previous conversations with FAA officials that FAA was willing to offer "informal consultations and training" to help the DGCA prepare for the March 2003 ICAO audit. However, he said, FAA now seemed to be proposing its own audit, which could result in an IASA reassessment taking place within strict time deadlines. EconCouns emphasized that the points were not meant to be threatening; rather, he believed it was FAA's intention to engage the GOT in order to resolve the outstanding safety oversight issues as soon as possible in a manner that would benefit both the United States and Turkey.

[16.](#) (SBU) Although clearly disturbed by the timing, Cebeci admitted that the FAA "was right" in pursuing the concerns raised by the ICAO, noting that U.S. pressure would help him move the government to accomplish the tasks at hand. Cebeci noted that the ICAO audit had been moved up to March 5; therefore, the DGCA would be extremely busy in the next several months preparing for that visit. He suggested that the FAA wait to see the results of the ICAO audit rather than performing its own review. If, however, FAA insisted on scheduling consultations now, late April or May 2003 would be better for the GOT.

[17.](#) (SBU) Ministry of Transportation Deputy U/S Dengiz echoed Cebeci's comments, stating that the GOT would prefer to

schedule the FAA consultations after the ICAO visit in March.

He emphasized that the GOT was working hard to meet the recommendations in the ICAO report, noting that most of the deficiencies had already been corrected, or would be by end-March. The one pending item was the new civil aviation code, which was pending with the new parliament. MFA Deputy DG Gokdenizler, while deferring to DGCA on timing, also indicated a preference for scheduling the consultations after March.

18. (SBU) Comment and action request: Post supports moving ahead. As Director General Cebeci admits, the DGCA has had the ICAO recommendations for almost two years and still has not resolved all of the ICAO concerns. On the other hand, we think a bit of flexibility on timing makes sense, given the apparently sincere GOT efforts underway to address the problems. It would have been useful to pursue the informal advice Cebeci had been led to expect. It could be, however, counter-productive to overload the DGCA in the run-up to the March ICAO inspection. Post requests that FAA propose a way forward to the GOT given their concerns. Further, post recommends that FAA consider whether it would be possible to provide the DGCA with informal training and/or assistance prior to the March 5 ICAO audit. End comment and action request.

PEARSON